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SECURITY : ~~SECRET~~ (Enclosure Unclassified) PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO : Department of State

FROM : AMERICAN EMBASSY, BELGRADE 748 April 5, 1951

REF : Embassy's telegrams 1360, March 24, 1951; and 1397, March 30, 1951

SUBJECT : Yugoslav Concern Over Developments in Albania

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EUR DCR NEA OLI* IE* S/S G P ce

Enclosed with this despatch is a translation of an article from the March 29, 1951 issue of Borba, by Vladimir DEDIJER, entitled "A Dangerous Game With Albania". The author was formerly head of the Yugoslav Directorate of Information, and is presently Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Yugoslav Parliament. He is a protegee of DJILAS, and an intimate of RANKOVIC, hence his views may be said to reflect accurately the opinions of the Government.

The article begins by pointing out the relationship between recent events in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Albania, involving purges in the communist parties of those countries growing out of resistance to Soviet hegemonistic policy. It states that from June 1948 to the end of November of the same year, when the Party Congress was held, fifteen members of the Central Committee of the Albanian Communist Party were either killed, imprisoned or removed, and that a further four members and candidates for membership have since been removed from the reconstituted Central Committee. The present regime is described as going through a crisis, with purges of Party organizations, and terrorism throughout the country, taking place. Dedijer then refers to certain events relating to the situation in Albania which are causing concern in Yugoslavia: the recent intensification of "Albanian reactionary emigrees" in Italy, particularly the groups led by Dzafer DEVA and Ismail VRLANCIA. The former is described as having been appointed Minister of Interior in an Albanian cabinet in 1943, by the German Government, after the capitulation of Italy, and as having been Premier in 1944; the latter is described as having been appointed by Count CIANO as first Premier of the Albanian pro-Italian Quisling Government in 1939. Enjoying Italian hospitality, these and similar men are said to be issuing their own publications, publishing leaflets, and obtaining planes for dropping these leaflets over Albania. According to Dedijer, planes coming from Italy dropped leaflets over towns in Albania for seventeen days in

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With respect to other countries, I pointed out that some time ago the Greeks had made public statements indicating that they might pursue guerrillas into Albanian territory, but that we had made clear to the Greeks our disapproval of any such adventurous moves. What little information we had about Yugoslav policy indicated that, while the Yugoslavs felt the Albanians were behaving in a provocative manner, the Yugoslavs did not intend to be trapped into any injudicious actions, and they had indicated they were content to let Albania "stew in its own juice". So far as we were aware British policy toward Albania coincided with ours, and we were not aware that the British were engaged in any operations other than obtaining intelligence and we did not think they had any other plans at the present time. I concluded by saying that we would be very glad for any information the Italian Government could give us on conditions in Albania, or on the activities of other Governments with respect thereto.

Luciolli said that he did not have any specific information on the subjects I had mentioned, i.e., the number of Russians in Albania, or the construction of the Soviet submarine base, but that he would check the information he had received from his Government and make it available to us.

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February of this year, and were met with anti-aircraft fire. He also alleges that "armed groups are being parachuted into Albania, and they are fighting there." In the same paragraph he asserts that leaflets were also dropped in Kossovo and Metohija (Yugoslav areas adjacent to northern Albania heavily populated by Albanians.) A veiled reference is made to "similar aspirations...being expressed in a more concealed form by certain circles in the neighboring country of Greece."

Dedijer makes the cogent point that these foreign activities in Albania constitute a highly dangerous game in that they play directly into the hands of the Soviet Government. He points out that the Soviet propaganda apparatus, as well as the propaganda machinery of the Eastern European Cominform countries, has recently been accusing Yugoslavia of alleged preparations for an attack on Albania. If foreign aggression against Albania, such as that foreshadowed by the events mentioned above, takes place, Dedijer states, it would be a heaven-sent opportunity for Soviet aggressive policy on a broad front (i.e., involving Yugoslavia) under cover of the slogan "Defense of small Socialist Albania."

In private conversation Dedijer stated that not only leaflets, but parachutists as well, had been dropped into Kossovo and Metohija. He also asserted that similar activity had been undertaken from Greece, but that he had refrained from mentioning specific acts in his article in Borba because of the disturbing effects it might have on relations with Greece. He asserted that this activity on Yugoslav soil did not cause his government undue concern because it was kept completely under control by the authorities, but said that the Yugoslav Government was seriously concerned by the potentialities of the current Albanian crisis, abetted by foreign activities, if the Soviet Union should utilize it to involve Yugoslavia as an alleged aggressor against Albania. He said that the aim of the Borba article was to rebut the recent Izvestia accusation that preparations were being made for an attack on Albania with Yugoslavia as the principal force in the projected attack.

The Embassy is of the opinion that Dedijer's point is well taken, and that if the Albanian situation should degenerate to a breaking point, there may be a real danger of Soviet intervention as an excuse to involve Yugoslavia under trumped-up charges of aggression.

For the Ambassador:

CONFIDENTIAL John J. Haggerty

John J. Haggerty
First Secretary

CC: Moscow, Rome, Athens, Trieste.

Enclosure: Article by Vladimir Dedijer of March 29, 1951.

UNCLASSIFIED ENCLOSURE TO
SECRET DESPATCH

Enclosure to Despatch 748
of April 5, 1951, from
American Embassy, Belgrade,
entitled: "Yugoslav Con-
cern Over Developments in
Albania."

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A DANGEROUS GAME WITH ALBANIA

In Eastern Europe, there is a new occurrence extraordinarily well illustrated by the most recent events in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Albania. General terror is no longer directed only against the remnants of the capitalists and feudalists but rather it is now being directed ~~in the first place~~ primarily against ~~the~~ progressive men --Communists and democrats as a whole. And this not only against individual Communists, as has been the case up till now, but rather against entire party currents in the Communist Parties of these countries.

This is happening after three years of almost permanent purges in these countries, after the execution of KOCI DZODZE, KOSTOV and others, after so many resolutions--taking of the oaths of loyalty to the Soviet Union and to Stalin.

What is the reason for the resistance by the Communists and other progressive elements in these countries assuming more and more serious dimensions? The basic question on which the Communists are coming into conflict (with those in power) is the perspective of building up socialism in these countries. After the Second World War, the popular masses of the Eastern European countries won a number of important victories: liberation from foreign capital, liquidation of big landholdings (in Hungary and Roumania) and feudalism (in Albania), deposition of monarchies, nationalization of the most important branches of industry, and big steps forward in the fields of education and culture. However, further development of these countries on the road to socialism has been stopped. The Government of the USSR is, by its well-known methods, ~~forms~~, exploiting the economies of these countries and is subjugating them to the interests of Soviet economy. Industrialization of Bulgaria, for example, is only a beautiful dream from the days of Dimitrov, dream about it is a crime to speak today in Cervenkov's Bulgaria. The standard of living in these countries is declining, not because of the lack of investments for the building up of industry, but rather because of the exploitation by the USSR, because of Moscow's decision that Bulgaria should remain, like before, only an agrarian appendage of the industrially developed countries. And what is most important, the bureaucratic system, which is being introduced by force in these countries, is suppressing the development of productive forces. The war preparations of the USSR and the making of stockpiles are of late reflecting on the degree of exploitation of Czechoslovakia, too.

This lack of perspective with respect to the building up of socialism, and the fact that their countries have not got the same rights as the USSR --these are the things which are forcing the Communists of these countries to think, in some of them more and in the others less--depending on the traditions and fighting spirit of individual workers' movements. It is not surprising

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where the Communists during the Second World War became the bearers of national struggle for independence. Today in Bulgaria, after the removal from the CC of the Bulgarian Workers' Party of 13 members, there is being conducted an entire campaign inside the Party organisation for replacement and transfer of all those Party cadres who grew up in the process of struggle in Bulgaria, and for putting in their places of about a thousand of emigrants who came to Bulgaria in 1944 from the USSR after having lived 10 to 15 years outside their country. The recent purge in Czechoslovakia hit the most militant section of the Party, those Comrades who used to enjoy a reputation with the working class both in their own country and in other countries. Felix Montiel, an ex-member of the CC CP Spain, said recently that the most recent purge in Czechoslovakia has hit those Czechs and Slovaks who fought in the Spanish Civil War.

The resistance inside the CP Albania is also characteristic. From June 1948 to the end of November of the same year, when the Party Congress was held, 15 members of the CC were either killed, sent to prison or removed, and among them were Koci Dzodze, Krsto Temelijko, Nesti Keredzi, Dzin Marko, Hadmija Dume, Ramadan Frlaki, and others. A new CC was elected after long "investigations", but from this CC too there have been removed four members and candidates for members. Abedin Sehu and Nijazim Isljami, both members of the CC, were removed because they wanted the question of the attitude of the USSR towards Albania's independence to be cleared up. Replacement of leaderships of entire organisations in Albania is a general occurrence, particularly of late. This is another proof of the fact that the regime of Enver Hoxa and Mehmed Sehu is going through a crisis. Purges of Party organisations are accompanied by intensified terrorism in the entire country. Mehmed Sehu, at the head of a special brigade, is carrying out punitive expeditions, pfonouncing death sentences on the spot, hanging hostages at cross-roads, etc.

The newly-created situation in Albania should be viewed in this light, and particularly the international aspect of that situation. Certain occurrences in connection with the situation in Albania are particularly troubling the public opinion in Yugoslavia, because they hide in themselves great dangers to the preservation of peace not only in the Balkans but in the whole world.

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On the one hand, these are certain sinister speculations of the Government of the USSR with Albania, and, on the other, an extraordinarily expressed tendency towards Albania and its independence of certain foreign circles.

Of late, from the time since Enver Xoxa's regime weakened, the activity of the Albanian reactionary emigrants in Italy has been greatly intensified, particularly that of Dzafer Deva and Ismail Vrlancia. These two persons are known by their evil deeds

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At the head of the ill-famed military unit "Kosovo Regiment", he killed masses of people in Kosovo and Metohija and in Albania. Ismail Vrlancia was appointed by Count Ciano in 1939, as the first Premier of the Albanian pro-Italian Quisling Government.

By enjoying Italian hospitality, these and similar men are issuing their own papers, publishing leaflets and are even getting aid in planes for dropping these leaflets on the entire territory of Albania. In these leaflets, they are telling the Albanian people that very soon they will again be under the power of the Beys; they are telling this not only to the people of Albania but also to the people of Kosovo and Metohija ! During the month of February of this year, planes coming from Italy dropped these leaflets on all the towns of Albania for 17 days. These planes were met by A-A guns, and Mehmed Sehu's police did not allow the citizens to go out of their houses until all the leaflets were collected. Another thing, armed groups are being parachuted into Albania, and they are fighting there.

Similar aspirations towards the independence of Albania are also being expressed, in a more concealed form, by certain circles in the neighbouring country of Greece.

The "misterious" attitude of the Government of the USSR towards the question of Albania's independence is particularly suitable for these combinations. The Albanian reactionary emigrants particularly emphasise the fact that the Government of the USSR has not signed a Mutual Assistance Pact with the People's Republic of Albania, Albania being the only country in Eastern Europe which has no such pact with Russia.

The Government of the USSR would welcome with open hands these mad desires of the Albanian feudalists and other hot-heads, and this for several reasons:

One, an attack on Albania would be for the USSR a god-sent opportunity as an excuse for Soviet aggressive policy on a broad front, particularly when one bears in mind how much the USSR has lost of its prestige as a peace-loving country from the time the Government of the USSR started to conduct an aggressive policy towards the FPRY. The slogan "Defense of the small, socialist Albania" would be an ideal cover for hidding the aggressive aims of the power-holders in the USSR.

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Two, that this thesis is not only the fruit of a fabricated view; is proved by the entire Soviet propaganda of recent months, not only through the official apparatus of the Government of the USSR, but also through the Cominform propaganda apparatus in the Eastern European countries and also in the Western countries. Just recently, availing itself of the keenness and political blindness of certain circles in Italy and Greece, the official organ of the Soviet Government, Izvestija, carried an article on the alleged preparations for an attack on Albania

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Three, The activities of the Albanian reactionary emigrants and of their helpers, suits the interests of the Government of the USSR as well. The threats to re-introduce the pre-war regime in Albania are welcome to Enver Xoxa in the first place, because they may force not only the Albanian Communists but also the other Albanian patriots and democrats, who do not wish to see Albania return to the old feudal syste, to choose the "lesser evil". Izvestija's article seems to have been intended for "home consumption" in Albania, particularly for the Communists among whom there has been noticed of late a great turmoil because of the attitude of the Government of the USSR towards the question of Albania's independence. This attitude reflects the two-faced game of the Government of the USSR towards Albania. In words, an alleged protection of Albania's sovereignty, and in practice exploitation of its position for the carrying out of an aggressive policy or even for eventual settlements in a favourable situation, where Albania would have to foot the bill.

It is a characteristic feature that a section of public opinion in the West, for example the London Economist, also sees through this transparent speculation with Albania by the Government of the USSR. In an article published five days ago, the Economist emphasised how dangerous that game is to the preservation of peace in this part of Europe, and claimed that the "entire confusion had been planned by the Cominform".

In unmasking the transparet speculations of the Government of the USSR with respect to Albania, and in condemning the imperialistic threats to Albania by ~~the~~ irresponsible circles in foreign countries, who by their work are forcing water onto the mill of the aggressive policy of the Government of the USSR, the Yugoslav public once more expresses its firm belief that the Albanian people and Albanian patriotic and democratic forces will find a way of creating ~~of~~ a really independent and free Albania, which will not be built up either according to the Soviet pattern or according to the old pattern, but rather according to the wishes and desires of the Albanian people. Dur ng the last war too, Yugoslavia showed that it knows how to value and respect the independence and freedom of the Albanian people. In these hours too, which are full of temptations for the Albanian people, the best friend of the Albanian people's freedom and independence is Yugoslavia.

(Sgd). Vladimir DEDIJER.

(BORBA, March 29, 1951).